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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 30, 2009

Front Street Improvement Project gets underway

The Front Street Improvement Project will begin on Monday, Jan. 4. The \$1.8 million project will replace aging water and sewer pipes and enhance the streetscape with new sidewalks, crosswalks and landscaping in a two-block area of Front Street between Market and Chestnut streets.

The project is a joint effort between the Cape Fear Public Utility Authority and the city and is expected to be completed in July, 2010. Replacing old pipes, some of which are more than 100 years old, was identified as the top priority in a citywide review of water and sewer infrastructure. While construction is underway, improvements will also be made to the streetscape, including new sidewalks, lighting and traffic signals. Both projects are being done at once to minimize disruptions to businesses and traffic.

Businesses and sidewalks will remain open throughout the project. Informational signage will be placed at various locations throughout downtown and traffic barricades in the construction area will be erected next week.

Traffic advisory

Work will begin at the Market/Princess Street intersection and move north. Vehicular and pedestrian access at all intersections will remain open throughout the project. Beginning at 6 a.m. on Monday, Front Street will be closed between Market and Princess streets (the 00 block) as well as a portion of the block between Market and Dock streets. The closure between Market and Dock is expected to last approximately one month. The closure of the block between Market and Princess streets is expected to last approximately three months. Portions of the Market and Princess Street intersections will remain open for traffic. More information about the project is available on the city's website at wilmingtonnc.gov.

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